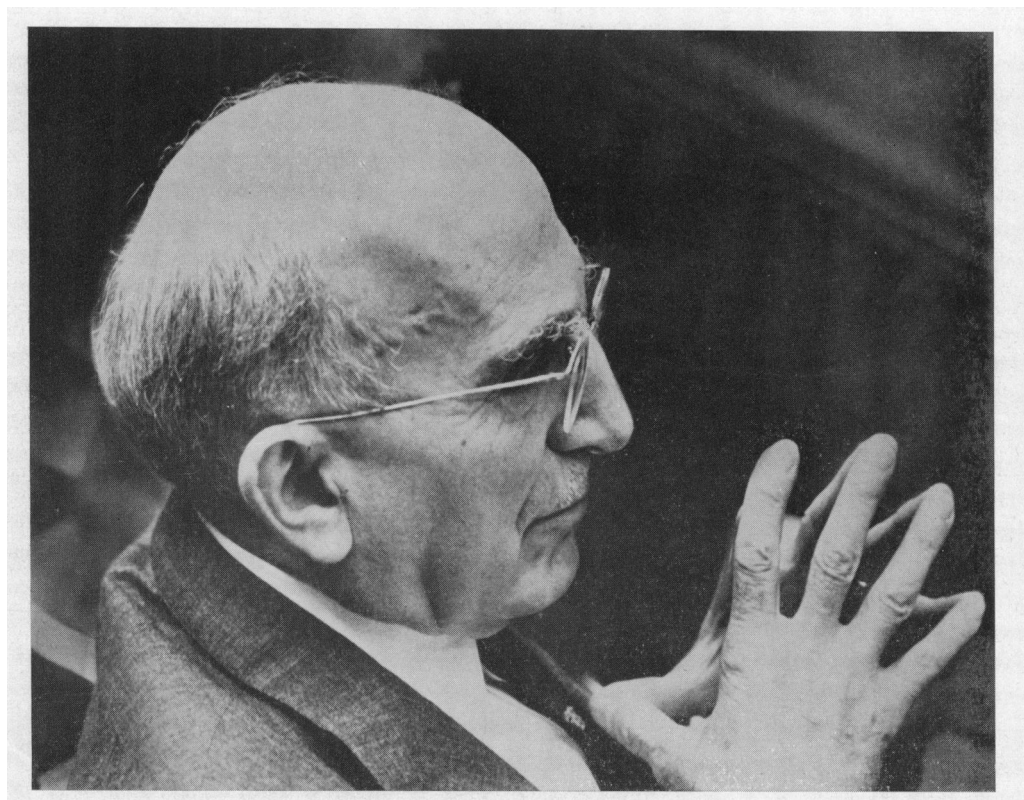


## Samuel Albert Levine (1891-1966)



The death of Samuel Levine in April this year removes one of the old guard who worked with Lewis and whose name has long been a household word in Cardiology. His passing will bring sadness to a host of colleagues, old students, and friends all over the world.

Sam Levine was born in Lomza, Poland, in 1891, and brought to U.S.A. at the age of 3. He was educated in Boston and received his medical training at the Harvard Medical School where he graduated in 1914. During his student days he helped to support himself by working as a newsboy, street car conductor, and waiter. He was intern to Henry Christian who established the first electrocardiograph at the Peter Bent Brigham Hospital and put Levine in charge of it. He obtained a fellowship to

work under Lewis in London, but owing to the outbreak of war, he went instead to the Rockefeller Institute to work with Alfred Cohn. In 1917, a cardiac unit was formed there to work at the Military Heart Hospital, Colchester, where it was attached to the British Army and wore British uniform. When America entered the war, this unit was transferred to the American Army and Levine's first posting was to a delousing station, but eventually he rejoined the American Heart Hospital, with F. N. Wilson, Oppenheimer, and others, and he published two papers in *Heart* dealing with "Effort Syndrome". He loved to recall his experiences at Colchester and gave a fascinating talk on the subject at Charing Cross Hospital some years ago. Sam became a true Anglophil, and to commemorate his

early training he endowed a Thomas Lewis Lecture in 1960, the first of which was delivered by Pickering in 1963. He gave the St. Cyres Lecture at the National Heart Hospital in 1948 on "Auscultation of the Heart" and was elected an honorary member of the Cardiac Society in 1955.

His whole professional life was centred at the Peter Bent Brigham Hospital where he was appointed Physician in 1940, and Clinical Professor of Medicine at Harvard in 1948, retiring in 1957. In 1954, a grateful patient endowed a Samuel Levine Professorship in Cardiology at Harvard.

Sam was above all things an enthusiastic and successful teacher and postgraduates flocked to his classes from all over America and abroad. His mind was ever alert for new ideas, and he had a remarkable flair for being in the vanguard of many advances in cardiology. He was one of the first after Herrick to describe the clinical features of coronary thrombosis and his monograph on this subject in 1929 became the standard work of its time. He was associated with Cutler in early attempts at mitral valvotomy, with Blumgart in introducing total thyroidectomy for heart failure and angina, and published a pioneer paper on masked hyperthyroidism in 1924.

His philosophy of medicine was epitomized in the preface to his textbook *Clinical Heart Disease* (1936), which ran through four editions, as follows:—"The hope is that this volume will prove practical. By this is meant that it will be easily understood and useful." Like Lewis, he sought to translate technical knowledge gained in the laboratory into simple clinical rules applicable at the bedside. At the Paris Congress of 1950, he condemned repetitive and unnecessary laboratory investigations when simple bedside tests, properly applied, would give the answer. Like all great teachers, he was a good showman, at the top of his form in clinico-pathological conferences, and he contributed in no small way to the international reputation of the Brigham Hospital.

Over all the years that I knew him, his vigorous personality changed little. He was invariably full of zest for life, overflowing with kindness and good humour, and a most lively and entertaining companion on all occasions. He led a full and happy life both at hospital and at home where his family consisted of his wife Rosalind, his son Herbert, now Chief of Cardiology at the New England Medical Center, and his two married daughters. We are grateful to his nephew, Dr. Harold Levine, for sending us details of Uncle Sam's career in Boston, and also to his lifelong friend and colleague, Dr. Paul White.

D. Evan Bedford

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